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Application No. 10/616,728

REMARKS

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the telephone conference initiated by the Examiner to discuss the Supplemental Amendment After Final Rejection filed December 29, 2004.

As a consequence of the conference, claims 1-5 and 7-14, as amended, are pending herein.

Claim 14 has previously been allowed by the Examiner and the Examiner indicated that claims 9 and 13 as amended are allowed as well.

Regarding the prior amendments to claims 1 and 10, the Examiner indicated that the lip at the upper narrowed end 38b of the tube 38 of the cited Watanabe '511 patent could function as the retaining member of applicant's claimed invention.

Claims 1 and 10 have been further amended to distinguish the invention from Watanabe. Specifically, the conductive member 27 is now recited as being stationary and cylindrical, and the contact 24 is urged outwardly relative to the conductive member by the resilient member 25 to protrude partially from the hole portion in the insulating member at an open end of the conductive member as shown in Fig. 1. The retaining member is arranged around the open end of the conductive member to retain the contact within the hole portion "independent of said conductive member."

In Watanabe, the tube retains the plunger 37 therein because the narrowed upper end 38b of the tube abuts a beveled portion of the plunger. The tube of Watanabe is not stationary and a separate retaining member is not provided as in the claimed invention. In the cited Watanabe device, the contact point between the tube and the plunger varies between the narrowed upper end and a cylindrical portion of the tube, so that the connection via the contact unit of Watanabe is unstable.

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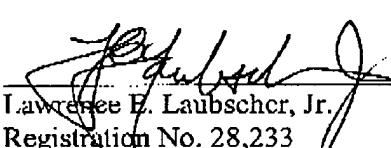
Claims 9 and 13 have been amended to remove an extraneous "and".

Corrected formal drawings with proper cross-hatching in Fig. 4 and Prior Art designations for Figs. 14-16 were submitted with the Amendment After Final Rejection of December 29, 2004.

Allowance of claims 1-5, 7, 8, and 10-12 is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence comprising 13 sheets (including one cover sheet) is being filed with United States Patent and Trademark Office via facsimile transmission to number 703-872-9306 on January 19, 2005.

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